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Message Text

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21
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W
---------- 040822
R 211030Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 395
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2031

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG
SUBJECT: INDO-BANGLADESHI RELATIONS JJ FARAKKA AND THE BORDER

REF: (A) DACCA 2020; (B) DACCA 2024

1. IN A CONVERSATION TODAY (APRIL 21), MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN, DIRECTOR FOR INDIA, NEPAL AND SRI LANKA IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DISCUSSED WITH THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR BOTH (A) FARAKKA BRARRAGE DEVELOPMENTS AND (B) THE NEW TENSION ON THE INDO-BANGLADESHI BORDER.

2. RE FARAKKA, RAHMAN SAID THAT BANGLADESH HAS AGREED THAT A VISIT TO DACCA BY A TECHNICAL TEAM CAN PRECEDE THE VISIT OF A LARGER, "GOODWILL" MISSION WHICH WILL BE EMPOWERED TO DISCUSS ALL OUTSTANDING ISSUES IN INDO-BANGLADESHI RELATIONS--INCLUDING FARAKKA. ACCORDING TO RAHMAN, THE INDIANS CONTENDED THAT IT COULD NOT SEND THE "GOODWILL" MISSION AND HAVE IT CONSIDER THE FARAKKA ISSUE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE STUDIES WHICH THE TECHNICAL TEAM WOULD UNDERTAKE. THE BANGLADESHIS AGREED, BUT ONLY AFTER INSISTING THAT BETWEEN THE END OF THE VISIT BY THE TECHNICAL
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TEAM AND THE ARRIVAL OF THE "GOODWILL" MISSION, BANGLADESH

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MUST BE ALLOWED TO SEND ITS OWN TECHNICAL TEAM TO FARAKKA
ITSELF. THE MATTER NOW LIES WITH INDIA WHICH IS TO FIX
THE DATE FOR THE VISIT OF THE TECHNICAL TEAM.

3. RE THE BORDER INCIDENTS, RAHMAN DESCRIBED THE EVENTS
IN TERMS IDENTICAL TO THOSE IN THE PRESS RELEASE WHICH
WAS FORWARDED IN REF (A). HOWEVER, HE WENT ON TO GIVE A
FEW ADDITIONAL DETAILS. HE SAID THAT WHEN THE DIRECTOR
OF THE BDR MET WITH THE DIG OF THE INDIAN BSF, THE DIG HAD
SAID THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO DISCUSS ANYTHING WITH THE
BANGLADESHIS IN LIGHT OF AN OCCURRENCE THE PREVIOUS DAY
(APRIL 19). THE DIRECTOR
SAID THAT THE DIG THEN ASSERTED
THAT BDR FORCES HAD OPENED FIRE ACROSS THE BORDER JUST AT
THE MOMENT WHEN AN INSPECTION PARTY LED BY THE BSF CHIEF
ASWINI KUMAR WAS IN THE AREA. AS A RESULT NO
TALKS COULD BE HELD, THE BSF REPRESENTATIVE REPORTEDLY

SAID. RAHMAN ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THE GOI HAS SENT
A NOTE PROTESTING THE INCIDENT, BUT IT HAS NOT
YET BEEN RECEIVED IN MFA.

4. RAHMAN THEN SAID THAT BDG SUSPECTS ALLEGED INCIDENT
OF APRIL 09
AND THAT OF FOLLOWING DAY ARE THE RESULT OF
AN INDIAN ATTEMPT TO HALT WORK ON THE REPORT OF THE JOINT
ENQUIRY TEAM (JET) INTO INCIDENT ALONG BANGLADESH'S BORDER
WITH ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA. HE SAID FINDINGS OF THE JET
HAD, HE UNDERSTOOD, SHOWN INDIANS IN A VERY BAD LIGHT,
AND GOI MMAY HAVE WANTED TO PREVENT REPORT FROM BEING
COMPLETED AND RELEASED.

5. COMMENT: RAHMAN WAS ASKED WHETHER LATEST ROUND OF BORDER
TROUBLES MIGHT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE APPARENT MOVE TOWARD
PROGRESS ON THE FARAKKA ISSUE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT
IT WOULD NOT AND ADDED THAT BDG IS TRYING TO
KEEP THE TWO ISSUES QUITE SEPARATE. WE CAN ONLY WONDER
WHETHER RAHMAN'S OUTLOOK IS NOT OVERLY SANGUINE.
BOSTER

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